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ABSTRACT

This 6th grade social studies unit delves into the belief systems and external religious, cultural practices of Black Africans. It is part of a series of guides developed by the Public Education Religion Studies Center at Wright State University. Study is focused upon the Ashanti tribe of Ghana knowing that although the multiplicity of tribes have individual beliefs and practices, there is a likeness that transcends all. For example, each tribe must adjust to a changing world and most tribes at this time are facing similar problems. Students are given some general ideas of the spread of Christianity and Islam into Africa and their relationships with indigenous religions. The unit emphasizes how these two religions entered Africa, what impact they had on the people they touched, and what is happening to these religions today. Unit generalizations, concepts, and subject matter are briefly outlined. Much of the document is an outline of Black Tribal Religion in Africa with such headings as: Belief in God; How does man approach God; and Christianity in Africa. Cognitive, affective, and psychomotor objectives are stated as well as initiatory, developmental, and culminating activities. The document concludes with evaluation suggestions and instructional resources. (Author/BC)

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BLACK TRIBAL AFRICAN RELIGION WITH SOME EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM IN AFRICA

prepared for
Sixth Grade Social Studies

by
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for the
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BLACK TRIBAL AFRICAN RELIGION WITH SOME EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM IN AFRICA

I. INTRODUCTION

I am a sixth grade Social Studies teacher. During the teaching year, I introduce my students to the continent of Africa. I have had no problems with the geography, economics, and history of this continent, but when it comes to the people themselves, I feel I have fallen short in my own understanding of them primarily because I have had such a spotty knowledge of an integral and significant dimension of their culture - their religion. This unit is an attempt to correct this shortcoming and give consideration to a sincere learning of just what the black African is believing as he sets out to express his beliefs through the exterior practices we so little understand. Therefore, this unit can be used in a larger treatise on Africa or could be used in a World Religions study. I do want to emphasize, however, that religion is a way of life for the African. It is deeply imbedded in his culture and it strongly affects the way he views his world.

To give my students a focal point or home base, so to speak, to work from, I have chosen the Ashanti Tribe of Ghana knowing that, although the multiplicity of tribes have individual beliefs and practices, there is an all-over likeness that transcends them. By no means is this to say that "if you know one you know them all." That simply is not the case, but to know one is to have some foundation to build upon if one is interested in pursuing an understanding of the religion of another tribe. What <u>is</u> shared among the tribes, however, is the adjustment each has to make to a changing world. At this particular moment in history, most tribes are facing similar problems.

In addition, I would like to give the student some general ideas of the spread of Christianity and Islam into this continent. These two religions have had the greatest impact in Africa, and although I am aware that other religions are existing there such as Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism in certain areas, I am not going to deal with them in this unit. In looking at Christianity and Islam in Africa, I am not concerned with "What is a Christian?" "What is a Moslem?" for I will assume the student has already received a good concept of this from having studied the Middle East. My thrust will be to explain how these two religions entered the continent of Africa; what impact they had on the people they touched; what is happening in regard to them today. This is geared to sixth grade so it will not be an in-depth study.

II. CONTENT

A. Generalizations:

1. People, no matter how primitive or sophisticated, are inquisitive about the meaning of their existence, the world around them, and their relation to that world.
2. The set of beliefs that a people adopt to satisfy this inquisitiveness and how a people act in accordance with these beliefs constitute a religious tradition.
3. A religious tradition is an integral part of a culture. Both are mutually interdependent.
4. The family is the basic social unit in most cultures and is the source of some of the most fundamental and necessary learning in a culture.
5. Religious traditions help define the roles, norms, values and sanctions to guide the behavior of individuals and groups within the culture.
6. When two different cultures come into contact either through conquest, commerce, or evangelization, each shapes the thinking of the other.
7. The world is in a continuous flow of change and to remain in tune with it, religious traditions experience change and diversity.

B. Concepts:

1. primitive
2. sophistication
3. inquisitiveness
4. beliefs and practices
   a. sign and symbol
   b. rites and rituals
   c. sacred places and shrines
   d. sacred scripture
   e. myths and legends
   f. proverbs, wise sayings, riddles
   g. ceremonies and festivals
5. tradition
6. religious tradition
7. world view
8. culture
9. conquest
10. commerce
11. evangelization
12. integration
13. interdependence
14. social change
15. continual change
16. diversity

C. Subject Matter:
(Everyone of my students will receive a copy of this subject matter outline)

I. The Ashanti - Who are they?

A. Geographical Region

1. Tribe from Central Ghana called Ashanti Region

a. Major city - Kumasi, seat of the King of Ashanti, guardian of the Golden Stool which is the symbol of national unity.

B. Economy

1. Chief cash crop is cocoa
2. Most Ashanti are farmers growing subsistence crops

C. History

1. Ashanti nation founded in 1600's by a Confederation of small AKAN states. The Ashanti are related culturally to AKAN peoples of Central and Southern Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
2. 1600-1800, Confederation expanded its territory and a number of its constituent states and exerted its political, military and commercial influence over most of present day Central and Southern Ghana.
3. British annexed Ashanti as a colony within Gold Coast in 1901. The Ashanti maintained an identity of their own throughout this colonial period and continued to be a distinctive ethnic group in Ghana though politically integrated with the rest of the country.

D. People

1. Language is Twi
2. Most live in villages and small towns
3. Houses mostly rectangular in shape and built around a central courtyard in which activities of everyday life are centered.
4. Family membership and inheritance are determined by matrilineal descent.
5. Religion of the Ashanti - much of the following is applicable to Black Tribal African Religion as a whole.
My chief reference is John S. Mbiti's <u>Introduction to African Religion</u>. I have taken much of the following from his book and I highly recommend this to teachers as a prime resource.

BLACK TRIBAL RELIGION IN AFRICA

I. BELIEF IN GOD:
   A. Name - The different tribes have different names for God. The Ashanti give the name NYAME
   B. What does God do?
      1. God is the Creator of all things
      2. God sustains his creation
      3. God provides for what he has created
      4. God rules over the universe
   C. How does the African see God?
      1. As Father
      2. As Friend
      3. God's Nature is to be good, merciful, holy, all-powerful, all-knowing, present everywhere, limitless, self-existent, the first cause, spirit, never changing, unknowable

II. HOW DOES MAN APPROACH GOD:
   A. Through prayer which links the spiritual with the physical worlds.
      1. Is the commonest way to approach God
      2. Done individually or communally
      3. Any time or place
      4. People pray on behalf of others
         a. priests (men and women), rainmakers, chiefs, kings, medicine men, heads of families
      5. Prayers may be of praise, thanksgiving, requests
         a. Individual requests for good health, healing, protection, safety in traveling, security, prosperity, peace
         b. Or communally for rain, peace, to stop epidemics, dangers to nation, success in war, acceptance of sacrifice and offerings, fertility for people, animals and crops.
   B. Through Sacrifice and Offerings - Man's intent is to project himself into the spiritual world. To draw the attention of God to own needs.
      1. Sacrifice - the shedding of blood of humans, animals or birds. The destruction of one life may save many.
      2. Offerings - no blood involved. May be foodstuffs, water, milk, honey, money
      3. Kinds of situations for sacrifice
         a. drought, epidemics, war, raids, calamity, insect pests, destructive floods
         b. since these affect community, community makes sacrifice
         c. animal chosen must be favorable to God. Must be of one color, black, white, red or brown. Domestic animal owner must be upright.
         d. sacrifice and offerings done at holy places - shrines, sacred groves, hills, lakes, waterfalls, etc.
         e. personal sacrifice and offerings made near home - may be at shrine in home

B. (continued)
f. prayers accompany sacrifice and offerings. Do not approach God empty-handed.
g. Ritual leader may eat sacrifice. Some may be shared by the community or left to be consumed by wild animals or to rot.

C. Through Singing and Dancing - the African loves to celebrate life.
1. Accompanies communal sacrifice and offerings.

D. Through Intermediaries between God and Man
1. Man knows his limitations so he asks help from helpers in approaching God
2. Helpers may be human or spiritual
a. humans - priests, kings, medicine men, seers, oracles, ritual elders, rainmakers
1. People go to them and tell their needs. Their duty is to approach God through prayer, sacrifice, offerings and in interpreting visions or dreams
b. Spiritual - may be dead national leaders or heroes, family, kings and chiefs, clan founders.
1. These speak the language of both the dead and the living and so thought to be most effective before God
c. Africans do <u>not</u> worship intermediaries

III. THE SPIRIT WORLD - African sees universe as both visible and invisible.

A. Many kinds of spirits are created by God.

SPIRITS[1]

	NATURE SPIRITS	HUMAN SPIRITS	
SKY SPIRITS	EARTH SPIRITS	LONG AGO (GHOSTS)	RECENTLY DEAD (LIVING DEAD)

1. <u>Nature spirits</u> - associated with natural objects and forces.
a. Spirits propagate and population is on the increase.
b. Associated with natural things such as sun, moon, stars, rainbow, rain, storms, wind, thunder, lightening.
1. May consider these to be spirits or are occupied by spirits controlling them. Sky spirits.
a. explain happenings people do not scientifically understand.
2. Earth spirits, connected with earth, hills, mountains, rocks, trees and forests, metals, water, animals, insects, diseases, etc.
3. Not all Africans believe in nature spirits.
2. <u>Human spirits</u> - Widespread belief in Africa that life continues after death. Many human spirits appear in legends, myths, and folk stories.

[1]Taken from pg.65, J. Mbiti's <u>Introduction to African Religion</u>.

A. 2. (continued)
   a. Those who died a long time ago (ghosts)
      1. Some outstanding ones given respect.
      2. Most feared and disliked. They lived so long ago that the people don't know them.
      3. Some Africans believe these ghosts will possess humans and cause disease.
      4. Yet said medicine men and diviners receive knowledge and insight from them, so not all bad.
   b. Spirits of people who died recently
      1. Remembered by people, so they matter most on family level.
      2. Believed to live close to homes and show interest in surviving families.
      3. Families remember them by pouring parts of their drinks and leaving bits of food for them.
      4. These spirits may be thought to be mischievous and responsible for trouble. So they must be pacified.
   3. Spirits may appear to people as humans, animals, insects or other things and they can change suddenly to a different form.
      a. In stories, people tend to exaggerate spirits in various ways.
      b. People draw and paint pictures or make carvings of their ideas of spirits or spirits are represented by masks at ceremonies and festivals.
      c. By bringing spirits so much into oral literature, art forms and ceremonies, people familiarize themselves with spirits and remove their fear of them.
      d. People are deeply aware of the spirit world, and this awareness affects their world view.

IV. THE ORIGIN OF MAN:
   A. Handed down through myths.
      1. Myths vary from tribe to tribe.
         a. "A myth is a means of explaining some actual or imaginary reality which is not adequately understood and so cannot be explained through normal description."*

V. CYCLE OF LIFE:
   A. African people concentrate attention of life's journey from birth to after death.
      1. They want journey to be meaningful, happy, safe and satisfied
      2. African religion tries to make the journey of life worth while for both individual and community.
      3. Before birth, expectant mother very joyful. New child a great blessing. Begin steps for safe delivery.
         a. Different tribes have different do's and don'ts at this time.
         b. Great shame falls on any who do not respect pregnant woman
         c. Thanksgiving given to God for pregnancy.

*Taken from pg. 77, J. Mbiti's Introduction to African Religion

4. Birth
   a. Baby delivered by mid-wives
   b. Men not present at birth; wife may go home to parents
   c. Sex of baby announced through various methods
   d. Traditions vary following birth of baby.
      1. Placenta looked upon as religious link between baby and mother. Its disposal requires certain rituals.
      2. Rituals for purification, protection, and thanksgiving
         a. Baby needs protection from witchcraft, sorcery, evil eye, disease, malicious spirits
         b. This ritual performed by medicine man or diviner
         c. Something tied to baby to stand for protection.
      3. Introduction to society several days after birth. Family gather for great celebration. Even living dead present for this. Baby's hair maybe shaved for purification, separation and newness. Shows anything bad is cut off. Symbolic washing also accompanies the ceremony, emphasizing purification. Celebration of new life is a renewal for whole community.
      4. Name is given. Important and chosen carefully. May be named to mean various things. After departed relative. (Dead come alive, so to speak). Baby may be named after day of week. This is custom in Ghana. Name may indicate the feelings of the parents, state of weather, events happening at time of birth.
5. Initiation
   a. Separates childhood from adulthood
   b. Takes rightful place in community as mature member
   c. Time of preparation for adulthood
   d. Circumcision is a religious act - flow of blood symbolizes a covenant between the individual and community
6. Marriage and Parenthood
   a. Marriage is expected and is a religious obligation to propagate.
   b. Completes the cycle of life
   c. Children are desired to continue line of descent, so if woman is barren, man may take another.
   d. The family unit includes entire clan. To increase and multiply is to enrich the clan. Clan includes spirits of the dead too.

V. CYCLE OF LIFE (continued)

e. Marriage then is very important event but thought of always in connection with procreation. Virginity at time of marriage also extremely important.

f. Marriage brings families together and gifts given by male family to female family ensures propriety of union.

g. Mates may be freely selected; planned before their birth by parents or later by parents to ensure they will have someone.

h. Children have duties to perform and ease into responsibilities of family life. Take care of aging parents and see to their needs even after death.

7. Death

a. Numerous myths exist in Africa concerning death.

b. It is believed that man in the beginning was to have lived forever.

c. All agree death is something abnormal. God meant man to live forever but the message did not get to earth or arrived in distorted form.

d. Death is a punishment for disobedience. Caused by sorcery, spirits or a curse.

e. Death is sorrowful but important. Many rituals and ceremonies connected with it. A proper burial is important.

STRESS: CYCLE OF LIFE IS MANIFESTED IN AFRICAN RELIGION TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT EACH PHASE OF IT IS A CELEBRATION UNTO ITSELF.

f. Rituals of death

1. Disposal of the body - preparing the body may change from place to place, but however it is done there are ritual leaders and elders in every village.
   Disposal of body takes place same day or next because of heat. Burial is usual means of disposing of body. May be in yard, family burial place, at place of birth. Grave may be rectangular, oval, cave-like, or even a big pot.
2. Belongings may be buried with body as the departed might need weapons and food in next world.

g. Funeral - size and importance varies according to person. For a chief or king. it is a national affair and work stops for much preparation. A new heir may have to be installed. Feasting follows the funeral and one may fast to get ready for it. Various signs and symbols are used to show that death has occurred. Shaving of hair is a symbol of separation. May smear themselves with white clay to signify death and mourning.

V. CYCLE OF LIFE (continued)

g. Funeral (continued) - May stop washing their bodies for days or months; certain bulls or goats may be killed to mark the death. Marriage partners may not sleep together for days or months; pots are broken up in the houses; some houses are abandoned for good. These things are done so that people are able to come to terms with the agonies, sorrows and disruption of death. By ritualizing it, people can dance death away, drive it away and renew their own lives after it has taken one away.

8. Life after death

a. In most cases Africans do not believe in a heaven or hell, reward or punishment. Life continues more or less the same as before death but the dead may live in various places.

1. Around the village, in woods, rivers or lakes, under the earth.

VI. RITUAL

A. Mbiti says that a ritual is "a set form of carrying out a religious action or ceremony. It is a means of communicating something of religious significance, through word, symbol and action. Therefore, a ritual embodies a belief or beliefs."

1. No sacred scripture in Africa
2. The African lives his religion through dance, song, and other visible demonstrations. What they believe they express.
3. Ritual action and words allow man to exercise some control over the invisible forces.
4. Besides personal rituals which were covered in the Life Cycle, man engages in rituals connected with farming, making new fields, planting, first fruits, harvest and stock-keeping, milking.
5. Rituals use different materials such as parts of animals, blood, chickens, wild animals.
6. Rituals are very important for good health as disease is not only a physical thing but a religious happening and to deal with it, religious practices must be used.
7. Rituals are used in connection with skills such as using bows and arrows, hunting, trapping. Others are concerned with the professions such as medicine men, diviners, magicians etc.
8. Rituals surround the leaders and with these are many taboos as to what is allowed and not by the people involved.

VII. FESTIVALS

A. Life of the community is renewed through festivals.

B. Involve wearing masks, dancing, feasting, making offerings and sacrifices, praying, blessing people and general jubilation.

VII. FESTIVALS (continued)

C. For modern man in Africa, these rituals of traditional life are not always feasible and so some are being abandoned. With this loss may go the loss or weakening of the religious consciousness of the African life. National festivals are replacing the traditional festivals in which everyone can participate wholeheartedly.

A CHANGING CULTURE HAS AN EFFECT ON THE RELIGIOUS TRADITION(S) WITHIN

VIII. RELIGIOUS OBJECTS AND PLACES

A. Personal religious objects
   1. Important to person or family. Bag holds them and may be tied around neck or to waist or ankle. Kept on roof or in house.
   2. Intended to ward off evil magic, discourage thieves, reminders of living dead, aids to prayer

B. Ritual objects
   1. Sacred stools, ritual drums, masks, staffs, clothes
   2. Colors - black, red and white used throughout Africa (Catholic priest was told to decorate altar of church in red, black and white)
   3. Numbers - nine in some areas or seven in others

C. Offerings such as nuts, beans, money, beads, old rugs

D. Places may be man-made or natural - shrines, altars, temples, graves, groves, waterfalls, forests, lakes

IX. LEADERS

A. Religious leaders are the keepers of religious treasures and have religious knowledge. Act between god and man. Wise, intelligent and talented with great personalities and abilities.

B. Medicine Men
   1. Man or woman - found in every village
   2. Job is to heal and put things right that go wrong
   3. Skills and knowledge handed down for centuries
   4. Some children inherit this from parents, or one may have a special calling.
   5. Training involves learning names and nature of herbs, trees, roots, seeds, bones, bird and animal droppings. Learning different diseases and how to prescribe for them.
   6. Also a counselor. May be priest in area. Solves problems with prayer as sickness may be from magic, sorcery, witchcraft, broken taboos or the work of the spirits. Therefore, not only do they deal in medicine to cure the sick, but to drive out witches spirits, to detect thieves, bring success, protect from danger, remove a curse etc.
   7. Good and bad medicine men. Most are honest, but a few may abuse their office.

C. Diviners, Mediums, Seers - work with the medicine men and their job is to find out hidden secrets or knowledge and pass them on to other people.
   1. Diviners - use method called divination. Finding unknown by using pebbles, numbers, water, animal entrails, reading the palms, throwing dice, etc.

IX. LEADERS (continued)

C. Diviners (continued)

Sometimes they get in touch with spirits directly or through help of mediums.

2. Mediums - people who get in touch with spirit world. Undergo serious training to do this. Tells where to find lost things, who may have bewitched the sick person, what types of ritual and medicine are necessary for the cure of people's troubles, whether an intended journey will be safe etc.
3. Seers - known to have certain powers to see things others do not. No training necessary, just the capacity for both foresight and insight into things. Make predictions and have ability to receive information from forces or powers not available to common man.
4. Priests -
   a. Job is to look after temples and religious places, to pray, to lead in public worship, to receive presents on behalf of God or other spirit beings, and in some cases to act as mediums and seers.
   b. Well-versed in religious knowledge, in matters of myths, beliefs, traditions, legends, provers, religious practices.
   c. May also be the ruler.

X. ROLE OF KING

A. Considered representative of God.
B. Symbol of people's health and welfare, unity and common tradition.
C. Has religious authority and sacerdotal functions.
D. Crowning of King succeeded by ceremonies symbolizing his death and renewal. Dressed in new clothes, given new name. He fights mock battle to defeat enemies.
E. Several taboo rules
   1. Not to be seen by people except on special occasions.
   2. Eats meals in solitude.
   3. Believed to have link with moon - descended from moon.
   4. Associated with fires - all fires in country put out when he dies.
   5. If king is weak, country is weak. His strength must be constantly renewed.
   6. King often killed when his strength decreases so country won't suffer.
   7. Elsewhere the king's death is kept secret.
   8. Worshipped after death.

XI. CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA

A. Believed in Egypt that Christianity was first brought to Africa by St. Mark in the year 42 A.D.
B. First 600 years it spread over Northern Africa to Morocco and up the Nile Valley to what is now the Sudan and to Ethiopia.
   1. Produced many great thinkers and ideas in Church.

XI. CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA (continued)

C. Islam, founded in Arabia in the 7th Century spread rapidly across N. Africa and although Christianity was not completely wiped out on the continent, it was nevertheless checked. Ancient Christianity remained in Egypt and Ethiopia where it is found today. It is the Orthodox Christian Church.
   1. In Egypt, the Christians belong mainly to the Coptic and Greek Orthodox Churches.
   2. In Ethiopia to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

D. In 1500 - 1600's, missionaries from Spain and Portugal brought Christianity to the coastal strips of W. Africa and mouth of Congo.

E. During the 19th and 20th Centuries, missionaries from Europe, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and the African converts brought Christianity to the whole of Africa. In some places, it spread very slowly, but in others many Africans became converts. In 1877 over 100 converts died for their faith in Uganda, just as many had done in the 3rd and 4th Centuries.

F. Today, there are many Africans responding to Christianity. By the year 2000 A.D. it is estimated that there will be 400,000,000 Christians in Africa.
   1. Problems it is facing: Still being linked to colonialism. However, Christianity was in Africa long before it was in Europe or America.
   2. Divisions in church cause problems. Many sects even started by Africans themselves to make Christianity reflect culture.
   3. Christianity remains a veneer in Africa. Because of its westernness, it is not free to deepen its influence in all areas of African life and problems.
   4. Strong points are its teachings and ideals. Building of many schools and hospitals. Most present day leaders educated in these schools.

XII. ISLAM IN AFRICA

A. Religion founded by prophet Muhammad in 7th Century. Followers began to spread into Africa after his death in 632. Came to conquer not by the doctrine of love which Christianity at its best teaches, but by the sword. Spread across Egypt and N. Africa and Islam established itself wherever Arabs conquered. Same happened in Horn of Africa and down the East coast. Arab Muslims turned Africans into slaves whom they marketed, exported or used in their homes and estates for more than a thousand years. Islam managed to wipe out Christianity but not altogether in some places such as Ethiopia and parts of Egypt.

B. Today, Islam is dominant in one third of Africa.

C. Problems. Many divisions and factions. Legalism. Islam has many laws which are a major part of Islam and which continues to exert great influence on the life of Muslims throughout the world.

D. Historically, Islam has produced great traders, architects, philosophers and fighters. Traded for many

XII. ISLAM IN AFRICA (continued)

D. (continued) centuries in gold, ivory and slaves. Built towns and cities. While Europe was in Dark Ages, Muslims in N. Africa and Middle East made advances in Mathematics, science, philosophy and theology.

E. At present there are only few conversions to Islam.

F. Did not completely stamp out African traditional religion. Still traces of it in N. Africa, the Saharan region and Somalia. African traditional ideas and practices have been mixed with those of Islam to suit the requirements of the people concerned, so that they get the best out of both. People adopt ways of dress from Arabs but in matters of deeper things of life, such as birth, marriage and death, they have remained largely followers of African religion.

G. Some areas have completely refused to accept Islam. Today Islam no longer uses the sword. Conversions of followers to Islam are few. Reason not known.

STRESS: WHEN TWO DIFFERENT CULTURES COME INTO CONTACT EITHER THROUGH CONQUEST, COMMERCE, OR EVANGELIZATION, EACH SHAPES THE THINKING OF THE OTHER.

XIII. SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

A. Christianity is spreading rapidly in areas where African Religion is prevalent. At one time missionaries condemned African religion but it is becoming clear that Christianity and African Religion have many features which do not conflict. African Religion and Christianity have become allies building upon each other.

B. African Christians can adopt the Christian idea of God readily. They give up certain ideas, beliefs and practices in traditional life and take on newer understanding of God's relation to man. They acquire the vision of hope of men being united with God at end of ages. The gifts which were once given to men but lost in their mythological belief are now to be regained such as immortality, resurrection and the making of all things new again. Christianity seems to fulfill a great need in the African world-view which had no hope of rediscovering those lost gifts.

C. There are many morals and ethics in Christianity which parallel African traditional ones.

1. Church parallels African traditional life in which kinship and extended family play a central role.
2. Church is Christian family and includes all those who have died and those who still live.
3. In reading the Bible, African Christians find many aspects of ancient Jewish life similar to their traditional life. Yet, there are new ideas which enrich people's understanding of the world as interpreted through the Bible and Christian teaching.
   a. They see Jesus addressing them. His concerns with the sick, poor, hungry, oppressed, comes home to them.
   b. They turn to him for help.

XIII. SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY (continued)
D. Conflicts do arise however.
1. Clash between Western culture and African comes when large number of moral requirements are put upon African Christian.
a. African rituals - offerings, initiation rites, marriage customs, place of sorcery, evil magic and witchcraft methods of dealing with disease, misfortune and suffering.
b. Some African Christians form their own Christian church to allow for their traditional customs.
c. They are trying to make Christianity reach the roots of African life and bring hope where there is no hope.
d. They take Christianity seriously and it gives them the courage to fight oppression and domination by foreign rulers, for it endorses their value of human dignity and love for all men.

XIV. THRUST OF AFRICAN RELIGION
A. Both Christianity and Islam have spread all over Africa. Islam has left traces of African Religion in the 1/3 of the continent where it is dominant.
B. Christianity co-exists side by side with African Religion in remaining 2/3rds.
C. In some places all three rub shoulders especially in towns and cities. Many people follow a combination of African Religion and Christianity; some African Religion and Islam and a few Christianity and Islam.
D. Also, a modern way of life is coming forth.
E. Will African Religion survive?
1. In rural areas
2. As long as there is a trace of African culture, traditional African Religion will be there.
3. Certain aspects of it will be modified by Christianity and kept in churches in Africa.
4. Also true to a lesser extent on fringes of Muslim areas where African Religion has been predominant.
5. Moving into towns and cities in certain forms.
a. Traditional medicines being sold there - traditional medicine men and diviners doing prosperous business.
b. In Nigeria and Ghana, many traditional festivals still observed in towns and trading centers.
c. In solving problems and in moments of crisis, urban peoples revert back to traditional religion.
6. Some aspects of Traditional Religion will die out due to
a. Education
b. People moving to cities
c. African Religion is complex and even if certain aspects of it die out, other aspects will survive and many of them will be changed or transformed to meet the needs of changing times.

XIV. THRUST OF AFRICAN RELIGION (continued)

E. Will African Religion survive? (continued)

6. d. Problems African Religion dealt with are human problems such as birth, death, suffering etc. and these do not change.

e. African Religion gave answers to their problems. However, these problems do change and as the African confronts this change, he will continually be looking for new solutions.

STRESS: THE WORLD IS IN A CONTINUOUS FLOW OF CHANGE AND TO REMAIN IN TUNE WITH IT, RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS EXPERIENCE CHANGE AND DIVERSITY.

D. VOCABULARY

1. Confederation
2. guardian
3. symbol
4. cocoa
5. subsistence
6. colonial
7. matrilineal
8. descent
9. inheritance
10. Creator
11. community
12. fertility
13. sacrifice
14. celebration
15. intermediary
16. spirit
17. ghost
18. myth
19. cycle
20. midwife
21. purification
22. initiation
23. clan
24. ritual
25. funeral
26. festival
27. traditional
28. stool
29. medicine man
30. counselor
31. magic
32. sorcery
33. taboo
34. medium
35. seer
36. priest
37. temple
38. orthodox
39. missionary

III. OBJECTIVES

A. Cognitive

1. The student will describe how the African explains his existence and the existence of the world around him when he relates verbally the Creation Myth.
2. The student will describe three ways the African approaches God -- prayer, sacrifice and offerings, and song and dance.
3. The student will explain how life is precious to the African as he describes the important events in the cycle of life and celebrates one event as do the Africans.
4. The student will describe how the African explains trouble, disease, and misfortune in his life through belief in the spirit world as a very real and active force in his everyday life. The student will identify who these spirits are and what persons in the tribe are equipped to deal with these spirits.
5. The student will describe the role of the king or chief who the African considers to be sent from God. This coming together of the temporal and spiritual sets the tone for the intermingling of religion with

A. Cognitive:
culture.
6. The student will trace the routes of Islam and Christianity into Africa.
7. The student will draw a time line to identify when these sweeps of Christianity and Islam took place.
8. The student will describe how African black tribal religion is changing today and will hypothesize about future changes.

B. Affective:
1. The student will demonstrate an increased ability to work with others in organizing and presenting a project to the class.
2. The student will appreciate differences in people by understanding how they believe and act.
3. The student will respect and appreciate differences in others as demonstrated by his inclass discussion.

C. Psychomotor:
1. The student will acquire research skills in looking for background materials to meet the requirements I have set down for them.

IV. ACTIVITIES

A. Initiatory:
1. Using Spirit Masters from <u>The African Experience</u> published by Milliken Publishing Co. St. Louis, Missouri, the students will gain knowledge of the Ashanti Tribe and village life in general.
2. I will pass out an assortment of pictures of tribal rituals and celebrations so that the children can begin to get the feel of this culture.
3. We will have a rap session about these photos. I will ask questions like:
   What seems to be going on?
   What emotion is being expressed?
   Are all people taking part?
   Is there a leader?

B. Developmental:
1. I will divide my class into five groups. Each group will be handed a listing of requirements. My part is to see that there are enough resources available to aid them in meeting these requirements. They have five days to complete them.
   Group #1
   Given: Ashanti Creation Myth (from Encyclopedia of World Mythology)
   1. What is a myth?
   2. Using the given myth, answer the following questions:
      a. Describe the Ashanti's view of the creator and his creation. (I will choose a number of concrete statements so that the group must study the myth)
      b. Then questions like:
         Give the meaning to the statements:

IV. ACTIVITIES (continued)

B. Developmental (continued)

b. (continued)

"If you have something to say to the Supreme Being, say it to the wind"

"It is the Supreme Being that brushes off flies from the tailless animal or pounds food for one who has lost his arm."

3. Relate another myth from Africa or any other country or one you already know, or create one.
4. Using the given myth --
   a. Give a play about it for the entire class
      or
   b. Draw a mural that tells the story of creation (To be explained to entire class)
      Suggestion: One could narrate; rest act story out.
5. How does a myth differ from a proverb, wise saying or legend? Give an example of each from Africa.

Group #2 You will concern yourselves with <u>The African Approaching His God</u>

Prayer Sacrifice & Offerings
Song & Dance

1. After studying your notes, what do you understand each of the above approaches to be? Be able to explain each to the entire class.
2. Give examples of occasions Africans use each of the above.
3. What is a ritual?
4. Choose one of the following rituals and show how prayer, sacrifice and offerings, and song and dance can be used.
   a) Death and burial
   b) The harvest of crops
   c) An epidemic hitting the village
5. Create the prayer, song and dance to portray the ritual you choose.

Group #3 You will concern yourselves with <u>the African's cycle of life</u>

1. Use your notes and make a drawing or diagram that shows all the important events in the life of the African. Use magic marker on large poster board. Done in best printing for exhibit in front of class.
2. Choose one event and plan a festival to celebrate it. Include the following:
   a. order of events
   b. where held?
   c. food served
   d. who presides?
   e. what religious practices?

   To be presented to entire class
3. To the African, what is family? clan? tribe?
4. Define lineage, descendents, ancestors, generation
5. What is the African's idea of Life after Death?
   100 words

Group #4 Your concern is the intermediaries (Living and Dead)

1. Make a chart showing the spirits
   Nature, sky and earth Human, near dead and ghosts
   Use magic marker on large poster board. Do neatly to be put on exhibit.
2. View Ananse film. Where does he fit in your chart? What role does he play?
3. What is a medicine man? List as many herbs as you can. Get pictures if possible or drawings. Make a file.
4. How does the medicine man differ from a medium and a diviner?
5. Your group will show Ananse Film to entire class but you must interpret it to the class.

Group #5 Your emphasis will be on the Role of the King.

1. Draw a picture of the "Golden Stool" or construct one of cardboard. What is its significance?
2. What is meant by a symbol? Give 10 examples of symbols.
3. Using your notes, find 5 symbols in African Religion.
4. Pretend you are chosen to plan for the installation of a new king. What steps would you take to make this a really super occasion?
5. What is a taboo?
6. Make up 5 taboos - one for each group to observe all day. You choose the day.

C. Culminating Activities

1. All groups will give their presentations and reports to the class.
2. I will work with them on Christianity and Islam in Africa. We will have a discussion about change.
   How does a family adjust to a new baby?
   How does a family adjust to divorce?
   How does a social institution like the church change?
   Is change necessarily bad or good? How is African religion changing?
3. It is important that the student has a very clear understanding of what a culture is. To do this, I will work with our own and then go to the African's. Then, after studying the traditional religion of Africa, I assume my students will see how intricately bound they are to each other.

V. EVALUATION

A. Evaluation of Objectives

1. Cognitive Objectives
   I am a firm believer in giving very short quizzes every few days. This helps me to keep my objectives clearly in front of me and it helps the student to know what I am expecting of him. I may say "take out a half sheet of paper and number from 1 to 10." In one or two words, students answer and then we exchange papers and correct them immediately.
   Sample Questions:
   1. To the African, relatives who have died are called _____.
   2. Those who have died long ago are thought to be _____.

A. Evaluation of Objectives (continued)

3. The African may leave a little food or water for these dead relatives. Does this tell you that these are near and active in their lives or far and inactive?
4. How do the Africans feel about the dead of long ago--those they did not know?
5. Would you say dead people are important or unimportant to the Africans?

I feel a legitimate evaluation at the end of the unit could be divided into the following categories: True or False; Matching; Multiple Choice; Completion; Explanation
Examples of each are:

True or False:

a) The Ashanti tribe believe in a Creator who takes care of his creation and rules over the universe._____
b) If a disaster strikes, the whole community will take part in praying and making sacrifice to God to end the disaster.___
c) Singing and dancing play a very minor role in the life of the African._____

Matching:

a) taboo _____a story that explains something that is hard to explain
b) symbol _____an object, action or words that stand for some belief
c) myth _____a no-no; not acceptable

Multiple Choice:

a) One of these events does not belong in the cycle of life: 1) initiation 2) death 3) killing your first animal 4) birth.
b) The most likely place that would be sacred for the black tribal African in his traditional religion would be a 1) church 2) cathedral 3) grove.
c) For matters pertaining to health, the African would go to 1) a diviner 2) a medicine man 3) a seer

Completion:

a) _____are spirits who have died a long time ago and are feared because they are not remembered.
b) Spirits that are associated with rocks, animals, rain and storms are called _____spirits.
c) A _____is an occasion when a whole tribe will come together in joy to give thanks to their god and dance and sing and eat.

Explain:

a) Why is a new child a great blessing to a family and to the tribe in Africa?
b) Why do you think there is little sacred scripture in Africa?

2. Affective Objectives
Since my students will be working in groups, I will evaluate them on:
a. Enthusiasm towards subject
b. Thoroughness of job given
c. Participation in group effort

2. Affective Objectives (continued)
   d. Presentation of material
   e. Listening to other presentations
   f. Attentiveness to me when I am lecturing or stating my goals

   Also, I will be looking for personal growth in attitude towards other cultures; acceptance of behavior of others through understanding; respect for religious beliefs of others.

   Within the class itself, I will be looking for cooperation, courtesy and respect for others and for the property of others.

3. Psychomotor (none)

B. Evaluation of the Student

I will evaluate the student in terms of test score, quizzes, group project, presentation of project, group participation, and class discussion.

C. Evaluation of the Unit

1. By Teacher

   The unit will be evaluated as to its success by
   a. Student interest - high or low?
   b. Student understanding - high or low?
   c. Teacher comfort in area - high or low?
   d. Discipline problems - high or low?

2. By Student

   Student may answer following questionnaire (no name)

   a. The unit was boring _____
      easy _____
      hard _____
      interesting _____

   b. The activities were meaningful _____
      Had little to do with the subject _____
      Taught me something _____

D. Evaluation of Teacher by Student

1. Student may answer the following questions about teacher.

   a. The teacher's lectures were boring _____
      interesting _____
      well-planned _____
      disorganized _____

   b. I understood what the teacher wanted of me
      very well _____
      partly _____
      not at all _____

   c. The quizzes and test were fair _____
      not fair _____
      too easy _____
      too difficult _____

   d. I thought the resource materials were
      too scanty _____
      abundant _____
      too difficult to use _____
      not relevant _____

   e. The teacher was
      always helpful _____
      too busy to help _____
      never available _____

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

A. Reference Books for Teachers

Achebe, Chinua. Arrow of God. New York: John Day, 1967.

Barrett, David. African Initiatives in Religion. New York: International Publications Service, 1971.

Dickson, Kwesi and Ellingworth, Paul. Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs. New York: Orbis, 1971.

Dorson, Richard, ed. African Folklore. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor, 1972.

Fortes, M. and Dieteren, G., eds. African Systems of Thought. London: Oxford, 1965.

Idowu, E. Belaji. African Traditional Religion. New York: Orbis, 1973.

Mbiti, John Samuel. Introduction to African Religion. New York: Praeger, 1969.

_____. African Religions and Philosophy. New York: Praeger, 1969.

_____. Concepts of God in Africa. New York: Praeger, 1970.

Mitchell, Robert C. Bibliography of Modern African Religious Movements. Evanston, Il.: Northwestern University Press, 1970.

_____. African Primal Religions. Niles, Il.: Argus Communications, 1977.

Parrinder, Geoffrey. African Mythology. London: Hamlyn, 1970.

_____. Religion in Africa. New York: Praeger, 1969.

Radin, Paul. Primitive Religion, Its Nature and Origin. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1957.

Ranger, T.O. and Kimambo, Isaiah, eds. The Historical Study of African Religion. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

Rattray, R.S. Ashanti. New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969.

Shorter, Aylward. Prayer in the Religious Traditions of Africa. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Smith, Edwin W., ed. African Ideas of God. 2nd ed. London: Edinburgh House, 1961.

B. Reference Books for Teacher and Students

_____. Encyclopedia of World Mythology. London: Octopus Book, Phoebus, 1975.

Ions, Veronica. The World's Mythology in Colour. London: Hamlyn Publishing, 1974.

_____. Mystical Rites and Rituals. London: Octopus Books, Phoebus, 1975.

Parrinder, Geoffrey. Religions of the World, from Primitive Beliefs to Modern Faiths. New York: Madison Square Press, Grosset & Dunlap, 1971.

C. Books for Students and Teacher

Armah, Ayi Kwei, The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born. New York: Collier Books, 1969.

Awoonor, Kofi. This Earth My Brother. Salem, N.H.: Heinemann, 1973.

_____. Book of African Names as told by Chief Osuntoke (Ceremony for naming a baby). Washington: Drum and Spear Press, 1970.

Chuks-Orji, Ogonna. Names from Africa: Origin, Meaning and Pronunciation. Chicago: Johnson Pub. Co., 1972.

Lobsenz, Norman M. The First Book of Ghana. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1960.

Ojigbo, A. Okion.(Compiled by) Young and Black in Africa. New York: Vintage Books, 1973.
Take Note: Use the story "My Sister Is Born" by Francis Selormey to illustrate how Christian African turns to his traditional faith in time of crisis.

Pawelzik, Fritz, ed. I Lie on My Mat and Pray. New York: Friendship Press, 1967.

_____., ed. I Sing Your Praise All the Day Long. New York: Friendship Press, 1967.
Both of these are collections of prayers by young Africans.

Sale, J.Kirk. The Land and People of Ghana. New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1972.

Schloat, Jr., G. Warren. Kwaku, A Boy of Ghana. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

Stokes, Olivia Pearl. Why the Spider Lives in Corners: African Facts and Fun. New York: Friendship Press, 1972.

Wright, Rose M. Fun and Festival from Africa. New York: Friendship Press, 1970.

E. Records

"The Third John Masefield Story Telling Festival." Toronto Public Library. Included in "How Wasp Get His Sting," an Ananse Story. Dayton-Montgomery County Library.

A large collection of authentic African folk music is available from Folkways Scholastic Records, 906 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632. Write for free catalogue.

"Missa Luba," Phillips PCC206. Congolese, Mass. Available locally.

F. Filmstrips

Fairy Tales, Folktales and Legends
African Folk Tales Series, Audio-Visual-International 501
398.6 "Why the Bush Fowl Calls at Dawn and Why the Flies Buzz,"
"The Strongman Who Boasted Too Much,""The Singing Drum"

"Sing the Glory of Africa" (Color filmstrip, recording, script, Past and present glories of Africa; side one of recording is narration of script, side two includes music and folktales from Africa, 1971, $10.00. Friendship Press or order through denominational bookstores.

"Drumbeat to Dialogue" (Color filmstrip, recording, script). The need for communication in a changing culture; flip side of record has indigenous African music. $10.00. Same as above.

G. Films

From Dayton-Montgomery County Library
"Changing Ghana" (19 min. jh to ad., 1970) The old and new Ghana.

"Anansi the Spider" (10 min., color) Traditional folktale which relates the adventures of the cunning spider Anansi, trickster-hero of the Ashanti people of Ghana in West Africa.